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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 19 December 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of the continuing turmoil and deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, due to the illegal, provocative policies that continue to be pursued by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people. Despite the fact that peace talks are under way, Israel continues to carry out grave violations of international law, ranging from the killing and injury of Palestinian civilians, military raids and mass arrests to the continuation of its massive colonial settlement campaign throughout the Occupied State of Palestine. These actions represent a dangerous escalation that threatens to further destabilize the already fragile situation and to thwart the current negotiations and serious international efforts being exerted to advance the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace.

In the latest acts of military aggression, Israeli occupying forces raided a neighbourhood in the centre of Qalqiliya in the West Bank today, Thursday, 19 December, and opened fire at 28-year-old Saleh Abd Al-Rahman Yasin, denying him medical attention and leaving him to bleed to death. This was the second killing of a Palestinian civilian by Israeli occupying forces in less than 24 hours, as in the evening hours of yesterday, Wednesday, 18 December, occupying forces, supported by 25 lethal military vehicles, entered Jenin refugee camp and proceeded to indiscriminately fire live ammunition at the civilians in the vicinity. One Palestinian was shot in the stomach, sustaining serious injuries, and 22-year-old Nafei Al-Saadi, was shot in the head and died of his wounds on the way to hospital. In addition to its incessant, deadly military raids, the arrest and detention of more Palestinian civilians has continued unabated, with the occupying forces arresting 14 more Palestinians, among them four teenagers, between the ages of 15 and 19, just yesterday, 18 December.

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Moreover, Israel's fixation with its illegal settlement enterprise, including the destruction, theft and confiscation of Palestinian lands and properties, as well as its forced displacement of Palestinian families, has also persisted unabated. In addition to ongoing settlement construction throughout the State of Palestine, evacuation orders were recently issued for 10 families near Jenin to make way for its illegally transferred settler population and the construction of more settlement units. In provocative remarks broadcast on Israeli army radio just today, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has vowed to continue "developing" settlements and stated the following, "We will not stop, even for a moment, building our country and becoming stronger, and developing ... the settlement enterprise".

Turning to the Gaza Strip, the maintenance of Israel's inhumane, unlawful blockade has continued to impose deplorable living conditions on the civilian population, especially affecting children and women. The economic, health, education and water and sanitation sectors have all been overwhelmingly devastated, and the humanitarian suffering and isolation that has been deliberately inflicted by the occupying Power on the Palestinian civilian population is worsening. With its imposition of the blockade, which constitutes collective punishment of the entire population, Israel has continued to obstruct the civilian population's access to necessary living supplies and materials, including basic medicines, in flagrant breach of international humanitarian law, to freedom of movement and to the pursuit of livelihoods and commerce, with exports at a near halt. To make matters worse, for the past seven weeks, the people of Gaza have had to endure the health risks associated from the overflow of raw sewage due to the failed operation of sanitation networks, caused in part by electricity black-outs, which on some days range up to 21 hours, and a prolonged shortage of fuel, a situation which has been exponentially exacerbated by the severe winter weather that hit the region last week, and has caused widespread flooding in Gaza, resulting in the displacement of thousands of Palestinian families.

The grave violations that continue to be committed by Israel, the occupying Power, coupled with the provocative statements made by the Israeli Prime Minister and other officials, cast serious doubts on Israel's commitment to the peace process and the two-State solution. Again and again, Israel is proving its preference to remain an occupying Power and a violator of international law, rather than to become a peace partner. In this regard, we call on the Security Council to carry out its Charter responsibilities to address matters affecting international peace and security, including such illegal and dangerous actions by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied State of Palestine. The international community must find the political will to address this critical situation to compel Israel to halt all of its grave violations against the Palestinian civilian population and abide by international law in order to save the peace process and salvage the two-State solution and the prospects for realizing a just and peaceful solution to this tragic conflict.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 478 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 10 December 2013 (A/ES-10/608-S/2013/729), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations

being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations